

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 17615 241718Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----038454 241720Z /43
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1826

S E C R E T CAIRO 17615

EXDIS (DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS)

FOR LEWIS FROM EILTS; AMMAN FOR ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR PEPR EG IS US
SUBJECT: MESSAGE FROM PRIMIN BEGIN FOR PRESIDENT SADAT

REF: (A) TEL AVIV 9325, (C) CAIRO 17589

1. REF A RECEIVED LATE THIS AFTERNOON. YOU WILL HAVE NOTED FROM REF B THAT SADAT TOLD ME EARLIER TODAY THAT IF BEGIN SENDS MESSAGE THROUGH U.S. EMBASSIES, HE WILL DECLINE TO RECEIVE IT. HE FEELS VERY STRONGLY ABOUT THIS. HIS REASON IS THAT BEGIN HAD ALREADY PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED THE CONTENTS OF HIS MESSAGE TO SADAT EVEN BEFORE IT WAS SENT; HENCE THERE IS NO NEED TO DIGNIFY THE BEGIN MESSAGE BY FORMALLY RECEIVING IT.

2. IMMEDIATELY AFTER OUT TALK, SADAT LEFT FOR ALEX-ANDRIA. SINCE RECEIPT OF REF A, I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO CONTACT FONMIN KAMEL IN ORDER TO TRY TO DELIVER THE BEGIN MESSAGE TO HIM FOR FORWARDING TO SADAT. I WILL HAVE TO TELL KAMEL ABOUT SADAT'S PERTINENT COMMENT TO ME AND I SUSPECT KAMEL ALREADY HAS INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO RECEIVE IT.

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I WILL NEVERTHELESS URGE HIM TO ASK SADAT TO RECONSIDER ON GROUNDS THAT, WHATEVER THE PRESIDENT MAY THINK OF THE CONTENTS OF THE MESSAGE AND OF THE IMPROPRIETY OF BEGIN HAVING PUBLICIZED IT BEFORE DELIVERY, HE SHOULD AS A MATTER OF FORM AT LEAST AGREE TO RECEIVE IT. WE WILL HAVE TO SEE WHAT SADAT'S REPLY WILL BE.

3. AFTER SEVERAL ABORTIVE EFFORTS, I FINALLY MANAGED CONTACT FONMIN KAMEL ON SECURE PHONE AT 1815 LOCAL AND TOLD HIM THAT I HAD RECEIVED BEGIN MESSAGE FOR SADAT. KAMEL NOTED THAT SADAT HAD EARLIER IN THE DAY CALLED HIM TO SAY THAT IF THE BEGIN MESSAGE CAME THROUGH THE U.S. EMBASSY, HE (KAMEL) SHOULD "APOLOGIZE". KAMEL WAS NOT SURE EXACTLY WHAT THIS WAS INTENDED TO MEAN, BUT THOUGHT THE PRESIDENT'S INTENTION WAS PROBABLY TO DECLINE TO RECEIVE IT. I TOLD KAMEL THAT THIS WAS WHAT SADAT HAD SAID TO ME EARLIER IN THE DAY, BUT AT THAT TIME NO MESSAGE HAD YET BEEN RECEIVED. NOW THE BEGIN MESSAGE WAS AT HAND AND, DESPITE THE PRESIDENT'S EARLIER COMMENT, I WAS CLEARLY OBLIGATED TO TRY TO DELIVER IT. I SAID THAT I COULD UNDERSTAND THE PRESIDENT'S ANNOYANCE ABOUT THE ISRAELI ACTION IN PUBLICIZING THE MESSAGE BEFORE DELIVERY, BUT IT STILL SEEMED TO ME THAT IT WOULD BE GOOD FORM TO RECEIVE IT. IF KAMEL HAD ANY DOUBTS, I SUGGESTED THAT HE MIGHT WISH TO CALL SADAT IN ALEXANDRIA TO ASK FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. KAMEL AT FIRST SAID HE DID NOT WISH TO DO SO. AFTER THINKING ABOUT THE MATTER FOR A FEW MINUTES, HE AGREED THAT I SHOULD DELIVER THE MESSAGE TO HIM TOMORROW. HE COULD THEN TAKE IT TO SADAT IN ALEXANDRIA THE FOLLOWING DAY AND THE PRESIDENT COULD DECIDE WHETHER TO RECEIVE IT OR NOT. KAMEL MADE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN HIS RECEIVING THE MESSAGE FROM ME AND THE PRESIDENT, AS ADDRESSEE, RECEIVING IT. IF SADAT IS STILL
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UNWILLING TO RECEIVE THE MESSAGE, KAMEL SAID HE WOULD LET ME KNOW.

4. A FEW MINUTES LATER KAMEL CALLED BACK. HE SAID HE HAD THOUGHT ABOUT THE MATTER SOME MORE AND HAD DECIDED THAT THE BETTER PART OF WISDOM WOULD BE TO TALK WITH SADAT IN ALEXANDRIA BEFORE HE RECEIVES THE LETTER FROM ME. SADAT, IT TURNED OUT, WAS NAPPING, BUT KAMEL HOPES TO BE IN TOUCH WITH THE PRESIDENT SOMETIME LATER TONIGHT ABOUT THE MATTER. KAMEL UNDERTOOK TO CALL ME AS SOON AS HE HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH SADAT. IF SADAT RELENTS AND AGREES TO RECEIVE THE MESSAGE, FINE; IF NOT, THE EGYPTIANS WILL PROBABLY ISSUE A STATEMENT AS TO WHY THE PRESIDENT SAW NO PURPOSE IN RECEIVING AN ALREADY PUBLICIZED BEGIN MESSAGE.

5. WILL ADVISE SOON AS I HEAR FROM KAMEL. I HAVE A MEETING SCHEDULED WITH HIM AT 1330 LOCAL TOMORROW, TUESDAY. EILTS

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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